

HISTORY OF THE
WILLIAM SNOW
AND
ROBERT GARDNER
FAMILIES

PIONEERS OF 1847 AND 1850

*about Gardner
Sarah Meeks Jr
William Meeks Jr*

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and with all her intimate associations and opportunities to know secrets of lives she was ever considerate of others. If she could not say something good about them, she said nothing at all.

In the neighborhood she was called Aunt Maggie by young and old, later on she was called lovingly Grandma Miller. From the day her brother's wife came to stay with them in the new home, it was always open to friends, and most of her life she had others than her family living in her home. Her father had four wives and many children and his business brought him to Salt Lake City quite often and for years when he and the brothers and sisters came to the city, they always stayed at Aunt Mary's or Aunt Maggie's place.

While she had many hardships, she also had many pleasures. She enjoyed dancing the Quadrille and the Virginia Reel and the old time quilting parties and rag bees. But most of all she loved people and her keenest pleasure were visiting her many brothers and sisters and her husband's large family of relatives.

On October 14, 1930, surrounded by her many friends and loved ones, she died as she had lived, peacefully, and quietly. She was 86 years old.

"Rest, gentle heart—while through the mist of tears
The rainbow promise unto us appears,
You are not far removed, and we shall meet
Ere long, your smile of love and welcome sweet.

She and Reuben P. Miller were married on October 10, 1868, by Daniel H. Wells in the old endowment house. They had eight children: Reuben E. Miller who was born October 30, 1869; Robert G. Miller, April 20, 1872; David O. Miller, June 19, 1873; Uriah G. Miller, November 28, 1874; Maggie May Miller, May 7, 1878; Edith Lyle Miller, August 7, 1879; Melvin P. Miller, April 30, 1882; Ernest F. Miller, April 30, 1884.

WILLIAM GARDNER

William Gardner was born May 22, 1846, while traveling with the pioneers on their way to Utah. They arrived in Salt Lake City on October 1, 1847.

As a boy William worked with his father at the lumber mill and hauled logs with an ox-team to the mill. He moved with his father to Southern Utah in 1862. There he and his father built one of the first mills that had a circular saw, in Pine Valley.

William married Almeda Burgess about 1859 by whom he had two daughters, Effie May and Amanda Jane. His wife died in 1872. He married Mary Jane Thomas about 1872 and they had four girls and two boys.

In 1880 he was chosen as counselor to Bishop F. W. Jones and continued in that position until the winter of 1884 when he was called on a mission to New Zealand. He left Pine Valley the latter part of April and was gone three years and eight months, having filled a very useful mission among the Maories. He lived among them, learned their ways and traditions and inborn qualities of honesty.

They, in turn, appreciated his sense of humor and high character and loved and respected him.

During his mission he came in contact with a minister who was working among the Europeans. He challenged William to a debate. The minister spoke first and gave his talk in Latin. William had not studied Latin but spoke fluently in the native tongue of the island. He felt quite worried because he thought the minister and the audience would expect the answer to be in Latin. The inspiration came to William to answer in the Maori language. One of the missionary companions who heard him said that William spoke more fluently that night than ever before. The native language is beautiful and musical and simple.

When he was half way through the minister arose and said, "I'll give up, Mr. Gardner. I'll give up, Mr. Gardner; you speak the Greek language much better than I speak Latin. I give up."

In December of 1886 he was chosen Bishop of Pine Valley with H. J. Burgess as his first counselor and Jeter Snow as his second counselor. The Bishop encouraged his people to beautify the church by painting it and beautify the town by planting trees and shrubs. He set the example of improvement and all lines of betterment of the town and people and never asked the people to do what he did not himself do.

About 1893 he was again called to New Zealand on a mission and this time spent four years. He went again in November, 1913, and in all spent about ten years in missionary work in New Zealand.

SARAH GARDNER MEEKS

and

WILLIAM MEEKS

Sarah Gardner Meeks was born on November 28, 1848, at Mill Creek, Salt Lake City, Utah. Her father was Robert Gard-

ner and her mother Jane McKeown Gardner. They came to Utah in 1847 in Bishop Hunter's company and Joseph Horne's division of fifty and arrived in Salt Lake City on October 1.

The sturdy pioneering qualities of her father and the quiet poise and refinement of her mother were passed on to Sarah together with a profoundly religious influence and a moral fiber that were an important part of her life.

Near her old home on Mill Creek the father built the first saw mill in Utah. The permit to erect this was granted by the authority of the Latter-day Saints Church, the governing body of the new community in the west. It was the first permit granted for any industrial enterprise in the Salt Lake Valley, outside the Old Fort at Great Salt Lake.

This saw mill was a very important manufacturing plant at that time for it made one of the most needed and most useful products in a civilized community, the product of lumber. Sarah carried a vivid memory through life of the many influential and common people that came to the mill for lumber and slabs and sawdust.

The huge piles of sawdust, so clean and yellow and fresh, were the most delightful places to play.

When she was twelve years of age her father was called to settle in the southern part of the state, then called Dixie, and Sarah made this long pioneer journey.

When she was thirteen she worked for Erastus Snow, one of the Apostles, influential, and a very good man. Thus she began early in life to make her own living and to associate with great men.

She wove her own clothes and helped to make blankets. The constant spinning made a felon on her thumb. Since cotton print was 85 cents per yard they were obliged to make their own cloth regardless of how slow, hard and tedious it might be.

In 1865 her mother moved to Pine Valley where for a year or so conditions were very hard and trying. Her father built a lumber mill in this valley and sawed some of the lumber for the great Tabernacle organ.

Celestia Gardner says of her: "There were about six young ladies in the social set of Sarah's age. They were Marian Whipple, Mary and Sophia Burgess, Sarah Gardner, Elizabeth Gardner, and Mary Hawley.

"In school Sarah Snow and Sarah Gardner were always at the head of their classes. The latter seemed to be the social leader. If the girls wanted to get up a May party or a Leap-Year dance, they always consulted Sarah.

"If help was needed in the homes in case of sickness or rush of work Sarah was always called because she was capable and congenial."

Celestia remembers seeing one morning two new young men come out from Robert Gardner's saw mill to wash their faces in the little stream that ran by the mill and past her home. She learned that these boys were William and Joseph Meeks, sons of William Meeks of St. George. They had come to Pine Valley to work in Robert's mill.

Both were big handsome young men. William was easy to get acquainted with and had a keen sense of humor. Sarah had soon made friends with her father's hired man. One day he asked her to marry him. She gladly consented on condition that William could get her father's consent. William replied, "That will be easy. He is now working in his granary. I'll go over and ask him. If he refuses I'll lock him in the granary until he says yes."

They were married soon after, so the father must have consented soon. Her economy with the means she earned working and her skill in handwork enabled her to have the nicest trousseau seen for a long time in the town.

They went to Salt Lake City to be married in the Old Endowment House on November 11, 1871. The trip was made by ox-team; they took a load of lumber for the Tabernacle organ and they were six weeks on the journey. They brought back a load of furniture and made their home in Pine Valley for a time. Three of their children were born there: William, James, and Arthur.

As the young Meeks family sat around their pitch pine fire in the long winter evenings he told them of his early life and experiences. Mr. Meeks was born in Potawattome, Iowa, on February 18, 1847. His father, William Meeks, senior, was born January 9, 1815, in Spencer, Indiana, and he married Elizabeth Rhodes. She was born January 23, 1819.

William came with his parents to Utah in 1852. His father was the first Bishop of Heber City. He owned a large tract of land in Heber City which still bears his name—Meeks Meadows. They moved to Provo, Utah. When a small boy, William, Junior, and his brother were herding cows in the foot-hills of Provo. They ran into a bear. Taking each other by the hand they started running down the trail. They ran until they were "give out," then stopped, and the bear stopped, too. When rested they ran again, this time taking a different trail and in some way, left the bear behind and reached home in safety.

William went with his father to help settle Dixie and while there the Black Hawk war was on and he volunteered to help to

fight the Indians. He was with the men who went over the Escalante trail, East Boulder, and through Potato Valley, Fish Lake, and fought a battle there with the Indians. He was in company with Elijah Maxfield, Ezra T. Benson, William Gardner and many others. For his services in the Black Hawk war the government granted him a pension in his later years.

While in the Black Hawk war he rode over some fine cattle country and often thought of these grassy hills and mountains while living in the small town of Pine Valley. Sarah's close friend had married George Forsyth and as William and George worked together with their cattle they talked of this land of new and greater opportunities.

William, his brother, Joe, and George Forsyth drove their cattle to Wayne County. The valley was new and looked like a pasture everywhere. This was a welcome sight to Sarah after their long and tiresome journey with their ox-team and horse-team from Pine Valley. But their hardships were not by any means over for it was a new country and the Forsyths and the Meeks families had to help build the roads, make homes, schools and churches. They helped make three townships for Thurber, their home. The first was down in the pasture land but this being too damp, a higher location was selected. On August 31, William was called by President Joseph F. Smith to be the bishop. He served the Thurber ward until 1895 and during this time he was justly called the "father" of the ward. He served as county commissioner where he had to go to Panguitch, Utah, for commissioner meetings. He was a leader in politics and stood for high ideals in government. He was the Chairman of the Red Cross during the Spanish American war and held the position until after the World War. He was director of the Loa Co-op for a number of years. He helped to organize the irrigation system and to build the canals for Thurber and put in two water systems for culinary purposes.

He drove the first wagon into Boulder where he established a dairy and there milked a hundred cows and made from eighty to one hundred pounds of cheese each day.

Though Sarah had a baby only six weeks old she helped to milk the cows, make the cheese and take care of eight children.

The ranch was many miles from town. This summer home was but a log cabin with a dirt floor; the cheese had to be hauled 225 miles with a dead-ox wagon—a heavy awkward vehicle—to Beaver where it was exchanged for clothing, food, and other necessities.

In time sheep began crowding in on William and the Powell National Forest regulations became more rigid so he moved his cattle to the Henry Mountains near the Colorado. In time the

range became over-stocked there so William took 425 head of his cattle and sent them to Canada with his sons Will, James and Archibald.

Sarah was blessed with good health and great energy. Besides the work of the home and at the dairy she found time to be very active in the Church. She was in the Relief Society about 39 years.

While she was president at Thurber, their society erected a fine brick Relief Society hall and furnished it nicely with curtains and carpets and made it a pleasant place for the meetings. The building also had a suitable room for storing grain for the famine. At the time of the world war this grain was sold for two hundred and twenty dollars. The funds were held in trust by the Church.

During the latter part of the depression, when wheat was very cheap the money was reinvested in grain, which is now stored in the commodious warehouse in Salt Lake, in the Church security center.

ELIZABETH GARDNER HELM

Elizabeth Gardner, the daughter of Robert and Jane McKeown Gardner, was born January 12, 1851, in Mill Creek, at what is now known as Murphy's Lane and Highland Drive. She was the sixth child and the fourth daughter of a family of twelve children.

At that time the home was a two-story four-room adobe house near the south bank of Mill Creek. Surrounding it were many large cottonwood trees. The underbrush had been cleared away from part of the area, which was called Gardner's Grove, and became the picnic grounds for people living in the valley.

Near by were the homes of Grandfather Gardner, Uncle Archie, and the Bradfords. Farther west were Baileys and Masons. Some distance were the Lucks where there were some large springs. To the south were the Gates, North, and Casper families, making quite a village. Here life was pleasant for the children despite the fact they had only the bare necessities and none of the comforts of life. Everyone, even the children, had to work to provide food and clothing for the large and growing family. Thus they were early trained in industry and frugality, which has been a characteristic of them.

Mother says Mary Helm Cornwall well remembered seeing her father start on his mission walking on crutches pushing a handcart up the hill. While he was gone, Johnson's Army came